Retaining talented people for your organization depends on their commitment. What is commitment? Sometimes called engagement, it means that employees are willing to give their discretionary energy to the organization’s success. David Ulrich, coauthor of Leadership Brand, contends that commitment is a part of the value proposition between an employee and the organization. The employee who is willing to give value should get value back. Ulrich believes that employees are more committed when their leaders provide:

- **Vision**, a sense of direction or purpose.
- **Opportunity**, an ability to grow, develop, and learn.
- **Incentives**, a fair wage or salary for work done.
- **Impact**, an ability to see the outcome or effects.
- **Community**, peers, bosses, and leaders who build a sense of community.
- **Communication**, knowing what is happening and why.
- **Entrepreneurship or flexibility**, having choice in terms and conditions.

Ulrich states that these seven dimensions provide VOI’s C&E for employees. Employees hold up their part of the value proposition by doing what’s expected. What is your role as a leader? You can strengthen contribution by helping people answer six questions.

1. Who am I? How does my identity meld with the organization’s reputation?
2. Where am I going and why? Can the organization help me reach my goals?
3. Who do I travel with? How does the organization build a community of support?
4. How well do I practice important aspects of leadership: humility, service, forgiveness, gratitude?
5. What challenges do I enjoy? Do I find energizing challenges at work?
6. How well can I access resources to balance my life (finances, health, opportunity)?

Inspiring commitment and obtaining engagement make up a critical leadership aspect to retaining employees. Find a coworker whom you trust and review how the two of you can customize this activity for your own work units. Then coach each other to excellence in this critical leadership skill.